

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 8222

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C O N F I D E N T I A L MOSCOW 13794

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: OEXC,UR

SUBJ: BICENTENNIAL EXHIBIT: USA--200 YEARS

REF: MSOCOW 13669

1. WE HAVE NOW RECEIVED ADVANCE COPY OF AI FOR JULY AND THUS HAVE BEEN ABLE TO EXAMINE THE LANGUAGE TO WHICH SOVIETS OBJECT. THE RUSSIAN TRANSLATION IS AN INACCURATE RENDITION OF THE ENGLISH ORIGINAL, AND THE FORMER IS WORDED SO AS TO BE MUCH MORE OFFENSIVE TO SOVIETS THAN ACCURATE RENDITION OF ENGLISH WOULD HAVE BEEN. IN ANY INTERNAL DISCUSSION OF THE MATTER, THEREFORE, WE WOULD SUGGEST THAT RUSSIAN TEXT BE CAREFULLY EXAMINED.

2. ENGLISH TEXT OF OFFENDING SENTENCE READS AS FOLLOWS:
"THE THREATENED RISE, DURING THIS PERIOD OF BEWILDERMENT, OF NATIONAL FASCIST AND COMMUNIST MOVEMENTS POSED ANOTHER CHALLENGE, AGAIN REQUIRING THE NATION TO EXERCISE ITS ALMOST UNCONSCIOUS PENCHANT FOR SEEKING THE MIDDLE ROAD, FOR EMPHASIZING THE COMPROMISES, THE BALANCES, THAT MUST COME OUT OF PERIODS OF TENSION".

3. IT SHOULD BE NOTED THAT THE FIRST PART OF THIS SENTENCE IS TRANSLATED AS FOLLOWS: UGROZHAYUSHCHY ROST FASHISTSKOVO I KOMMUNISTICHESKOVO DVIZHENIY V ETO "SMUTNOYE VREMYA'...". IN OMITTING "NATIONAL" AS MODIFIER
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TO "FACIST AND COMMUNIST MOVEMENTS", IMPLICATION IS THAT

AUTHOR IS TALKING ABOUT NAZI GERMANY AND USSR. ALSO "THREATENING GROWTH" IS STRONGER AND MORE ACTIVE THAN "THREATENED RISE" (PRESENT ACTIVE PARTICIPLE AS CONTRASTED WITH PAST PASSIVE). FINALLY, USE OF TERM "SMUTNOYE VREMYA" (USED PRIMARILY IN REFERENCE TO RUSSIA IN EARLY 17TH CENTRY WHEN POLES OCCUPIED MOSCOW AND PUT PRETENDER ON THRONE) IS NOT ONLY MUCH TOO STRON FOR "PERIOD OF BEWILDERMENT", BUT ALSO CARRIES SERIOUSLY MISLEADING IMPLICATIONS. WHAT ONE GETS IN RUSSIAN IS A JUXTAPOSITION OF FOUR EMOTION-LADEN TERMS WHICH CONVEY TO READER THE IMAGE OF A UNITED STATES DESPERATELY FENDING OFF NAZI AND SOVIET AGRESSION WHICH THREATENED ITS NATIONAL EXISTENCE. THIS IS NOT WHAT THE ENGLISH TEXT SUGGESTS AND FURTHERMORE IS NEITHER ACCURATE HISTORY NOR A POLITIC THING TO SAY TO A SOVIET AUDIENCE.

4. A SLIGHT ALTERATION OF THE RUSSIAN TEXT WOULD CONVEY ACCURATELY WHAT THE AUTHOR SAID, WITHOUT STIMULATING UNINTENDED INFERENCES. FOR EXAMPLE, SOMETHING ALONG FOLLOWING LINES WOULD BE BOTH ACCURATE IN SUBSTANCE AND ALSO UNEXCEPTIONABLE FROM SOVIET POINT OF VIEW: "THE RISE, DURING THIS PERIOD OF BEWILDERMENT (SMUSHCHENIE OR NEDOUMENIE, NOT RPT NOT SMUTNOYE VREMYA), OF AMERICAN EXTREMIST (OR PERHAPS TOTALITARIAN) MOVEMENTS ON THE RIGHT AND THE LEFT OF THE POLITICAL SPECTRUM POSED ANOTHER CHALLENGE, ETC."

5. ALTHOUGH WE SHARE DEPARTMENT'S AND AGENCY'S CONCERN OVER MOST UNFORTUNATE PRECEDENT WHICH WOULD BE SET BY APPEARING TO SUBMIT TO SOVIET CENSORSHIP, WE FIND THAT IF WE CONTINUE TO INSIST ON THE RUSSIAN TEXT AS IT STANDS, WE WILL NOT ONLY BE FORBIDDEN TO DISTRIBUTE BROCHURES BUT WILL BE ILLOGICALLY INSISTING ON SAYING SOMETHING WHICH WE DID NOT INTEND TO SAY IN THE FIRST PLACE, AND UPON REFLECTIONS, WOULD PRESUMABLY NOT WISH TO SAY. IF IT IS TECHNICALLY POSSIBLE TO CHANGE OFFENDING SENTENCE IN BROCHURE, THE LEAST DAMAGING WAY OUT MIGHT BE TO INFORM MFA AND CHAMBER OF COMMERCE ORALLY THAT REVIEW OF BROCHURE REVEALS THAT RUSSIAN TRANSLATION IS INACCURATE RENDITION OF ENGLISH ORIGINAL, AND THAT WHILE WE ARE IN NO WAY PREPARED TO ACCEPT ANY SOVIET RIGHT OF CENSORSHIP, HOWEVER, IMPLICIT, CONFIDENTIAL

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WE OF COURSE ARE TAKING STEPS TO INSURE THAT RUSSIAN TEXT CONFORMS TO ENGLISH ORIGINAL.

6. CONCENING AI ISSUE 237, NOW ENROUTE MOSCOW WITH SEPT 8ETA, IF ANY DEVIATION FROM SOP DIRECT DELIVERY FROM CUSTOMS TO SOYUZPECHAT IS ENVISIONED WE MUST BE INFORMED IMMEDIATELY OF STEPS TO TAKE. OUR INCLINATION IS TO NOT RAISE ISSUE AND RISK

POTENTIAL PRECEDENT-SETTING ACTION. UNLIKE EXHIBITS
AGREEMENT PROVIDING FOR DELIVERY OF SAMPLE COPIES
PRIOR TO DISTRIBUTION, AI AND SOVIET LIFE ARE DISTRIBUTED
DIRECTLY. IF SOVIETS COMPLAIN, WE CAN OFFER SAME REPLY
AS SUGGESTED FOR BROCHURE. IF SOVIETS PREVENT DISTRIBUTION
OF 237, REQUEST YOUR GUIDANCE REGARDING ANY PRECEDENT
AND WHETHER SIMILAR ACTION COULD/SHOULD BE TAKEN AGAINST
SOVIET LIFE.
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